

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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WSP Crime Lab Featured in A&E Program

"Cold Case Files", a national television show airing tomorrow night on A&E Network, will highlight a 1981 Seattle Police Department homicide case, solved primarily by analysis of DNA evidence 20 years later.

Kristen Sumstad was found raped and murdered in a cardboard box in 1981. The primary suspect in the case was John Athan, a neighbor of Kristen, who was 14 at the time of the murder. Twenty years later, Seattle Police detectives were able to secure a sample of Mr. Athan's saliva from an envelope flap. DNA scientists in the WSP Crime Lab in Seattle were able to type the saliva on the envelope and link it to DNA associated with the body of Kristen Sumstad. This led to trial in Seattle in 2004 in which Mr. Athan was found guilty of homicide.

The show will feature interviews with the detectives who investigated the case, as well as Dr. Beverly Himick, the DNA analyst in the WSP Seattle Crime Lab.

Cold Case Files has featured several cases from the WSP Crime Lab Division over the past year. Check local listings for the exact time of the show's airing.

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